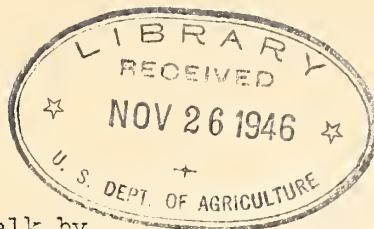


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Excerpt from a radio talk by
W. W. Vincent, Chief, Western District,
Food and Drug Administration, U. S.
Department of Agriculture, delivered through
KGO, San Francisco, December 11, 1930

Serial No. 27.

HOW TO READ THE LABEL

Confectionery

Confectionery is a food. The food and drugs act defines food as including all articles used for food, drink, confectionery or condiment by man or other animal, regardless of whether simple, mixed or compounded. The law, in the case of confectionery, further defines the product as adulterated, if it contain terra alba, barytes, talc, chrome yellow or other mineral substance, or poisonous color or flavor or other ingredient deleterious or detrimental to health, or any vinous, malt, or spirituous liquor or compound or narcotic drug. I will venture few of you ever dreamed that such an array of products might be used in confectionery. But they have been, or Congress would not have written that section into the food and drugs act.

Years ago, many of the colors used to dye foods were deleterious in character - they contained arsenic or other heavy metal. Traffic in these was prohibited with the passage of your food and drugs act. Your Food and Drug Administration now sanctions, for use in food, 12 harmless coal-tar dyes. Upon the request of manufacturers, we examine and certify these as to purity, and the manufacturers or distributors having them certified are then permitted to indicate upon their labels that such dyes are certified. I will tell you more about artificial colors later. I just mention now that most confectionery manufacturers using coal-tar dyes employ those which have previously been certified by your Food and Drug Administration.

Did you notice that I said that candy which contains any spirituous liquor or narcotic drug is held to be adulterated? Folks, there are a number of actions reported in the Federal Notices of Judgment where candy with a content of spirituous liquor has been proceeded against. So, when you buy confections labeled as a rum-flavored chocolate, or a brandy-flavored chocolate, or any confection which, from its name, you might think has an alcoholic content, you will actually get the flavor, not the alcohol. The food and drugs act does not permit any spirituous liquor in candy.

Candy manufacture has become an enormous business. A preliminary report by the U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce estimates sales value of confectionery manufactured in the United States during 1929 at a

total of \$340,817,000. Folks, that money was spent for 1,561,856,900 lbs. of confectionery. With all this candy being consumed, shouldn't you exercise some discrimination in its purchase? Let me illustrate. How many of you before purchasing a nice box of chocolate creams look for the net weight statement? Many packages that appear to hold a pound, you will find are labeled with net weight statements showing contents from 10 to 13 ounces. If you would get your money's worth, first read the net weight statement.

If you are buying packaged hard candies, such as fruit drops or jelly beans with fruit centers - read the label, and I'll tell you why --

Do you know the difference between a "raspberry fruit drop" and a "fruit drop raspberry-flavored"? If the candy is labeled with the name of a fruit, it must contain the fruit juice or a flavor derived from that fruit. If imitation flavors are used, the labels will read "imitation raspberry drops" and, further, bear a declaration of artificial flavor and color, if the manufacturer has added such ingredients.

Quite a few chocolate-covered fruits are now sold, such as cherries, strawberries, apricots and prunes. The cherries probably enjoy the largest sale. The cherry used is generally the imitation maraschino, that red bottled cherry with which you are all familiar. Not all manufacturers use artificially colored cherries, but those who do place a statement on the label to the effect that the cherries used are either "artificially flavored and colored" or else contain "imitation cherry flavor and color."

Do you know how they make these imitation maraschino cherries in America? The bulk of them are produced on the Pacific Coast, both from cherries grown here and also from cherries imported from France in brine. They use white cherries - principally Royal Anne types. These are placed in barrels with a weak water solution of sulphur dioxide which bleaches and preserves them. On removal from the barrels, they are washed to eliminate the excess sulphur dioxide, dyed with an artificial red coal-tar color, and artificially flavored, usually with benzaldehyde. They are then packed in a sugar sirup. If you read your labels you will find that they say "Artificially Colored and Flavored" and specify the presence of sulphur dioxide or benzoate of soda, if such is the case. The product packed in America makes no reference to its being a maraschino cherry unless cherries of the Marasca type have actually been imported and used in the preparation of the product. The genuine maraschino cherry is usually packed in an alcoholic cordial.

Candies labeled "Chocolate" or "Chocolate Bars," or "Chocolate Bon Bons" must consist of pure chocolate or contain pure chocolate coating. You can be assured that if the package containing your chocolates or chocolate-coated confections carries the word, "Chocolate," that pure chocolate has been used. Cheaper ingredients, such as hydrogenated coconut oil, are sometimes used to adulterate chocolate coatings. When these substitutes are wholesome foods, as is usually the case, there is no objection to their use, provided

their presence is plainly declared on the label.

Your food and drug agents watch all the various ingredients that enter into confectionery manufacture: The nut meats get a lot of our attention. Last year, in my district alone, we made 32 seizures of walnut meats aggregating 80,150 pounds and the majority of these were sampled in the possession of confectionery manufacturers. They were seized because they contained excessive percentages of wormy or moldy nut meats. We also examined 17 importations, totaling 147,720. lbs., of walnut meats coming from China. Of these, 2 importations, totaling 14,955 pounds, were detained. None of that material which was seized or none of that which was detained was released to go into your candy until all the objectionable nut meats were taken out to the satisfaction of your food and drug agent.

